(b) the expenditure incurred in this exercise including the man-hours of all staff and its cost;

(c) whether similar experiments are proposed to be tried out in other branches of the Ministry; and

(d) whether any guidelines for receiving complaints have been prepared for public use and whether these have been sent to all the environment-related NGOs in the country and if so, the details of each NGOs to whom these were sent and the response on each indicating the action taken thereon by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The Ministry of Environment and Forests have set up a Public Grievances Redressal Cell. The cell deals with grievances relating to the areas of environmental degradation, pollution, cruelty to animals and release of grants to various organisations. 103 grievances were received till 31st January, 1992, of which 56 have been disposed of.

(b) Separate expenditure is not involved as the cell is being looked after by the existing staff. It is not possible to separately work out the man hours spent by these staff exclusively for the cell.

(c) There is no such proposal for the present.

(d) The order setting up the Public Grievances Redressal Cell, including the procedure to be followed for registering grievances, has been given wide publicity through the Press. This order has not been addressed to any individual organisations including Non-Government Organisations and hence the question of response from Non-Government Organisations does not arise. However, Non-Government Organisations are also free to register grievances with the Grievances Cell and some of them have availed of this facility.

Pollutiin of Alenga Well

3030. DR. NAGEN SAIKIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the effluents of the Jagiroad Paper Mill contains live mercury and has polluted the Alenga Well which is connected with the River Kalanga and through Kalanga with the Brahmaputra; and

(b) what steps Government are taking to prevent the diseases like MINA MOTA of Japan which occured in Minamota in 1972 due to live Mercury?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Mercury bearing effluent of the Jagiroad Paper Mill is treated for mecury removal and the treated effluent is discharged into Alenga Well.

Rhinos and Deer in Kaziranga Sanctuary

3031. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report which appeared in the 'Hindu' of December, 11, 1991 to the effect that at least 17 full-grown rhinos and a large number of deer have been killed during the year in Kaziranga Sanctuary;

(b) if so, the population of rhinos and deer in Kaziranga in the beginning of 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1992 also indicating the number of new-born and otherwise added animals during each year; and

(c) the steps taken to preserve and protect the animals in this Sanctuary in particular and the country in general?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir. According to information provided by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Assam, durng 1991, upto 10-12-91, 19 rhinos were poached in the area, including 4 killed outside the Park. The Park protection staff succeeded in recovering 8 horns from the above poaching cases. No poaching of deer has been reported from the area.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) Steps taken to protect the wildlife of the Park and of the country in general include:

(1) The endangered animals like the rhino,tiger, sloth bear, swamp deer, hoolock gibbon, etc, found in the Kaziranga National Park are included in the Schedules I and II (Part II) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thus giving the species maximum possible protection under the law.

(2) Financial assistance under the Centrally sponsored scheme 'Conservation of rhinos in Assam' is provided to the Kaziranga National Parks and other protected areas in Assam where the rhino is found, to strengthen protection measures and also to take other measures against floods, fires, encroachment, etc.

(3) Assistance under the Centrally sponsored scheme 'Project Tiger', 'Assistance for the development of national parks and sanctuaries' and 'Ecodevolopment around national parks and Sancturaies, including Tiger Reserves', is provided to the State Governments for the establishment, expansion and development of a network of sanctuaries and national parks with the objective of conserving and protecting wildlife and its habitats.

(4) Under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, stringent punishments have been prescribed for causing any disturbance to the wildlife sanctuaries and national parks. There is also a complete ban on the hunting of wildlife.

(5) Under the Centrally sponsored 'Control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products', assistance is provided to the State Governments to strengthen measures to protect wildlife outside wildlife reserves from poaching and illegal trade.

(6) India is a member of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), under which international trade in endangered species of wildlife is prohibited.

(7) A system of reward and incentives to detect poaching and illegal trade in wildlife has been introduced by the Central and State Governments.

Shrinking of Forests in the country

3032. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of shrinkage of forest during 1989, 1990, 1991 as against the forest cover in the beginning of 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1992, State-wise;